



# Pine Lodge

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 134766  
**LEA** Cheshire  
**Inspection number** 282684  
**Inspection dates** 22 November 2005 to 22 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Adrian Simm CfBT Lead Inspector

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit	<b>School address</b>	79 Liverpool Road
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit		Chester
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	13 to 17		Cheshire CH2 1AW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01244 364660
<b>Number on roll</b>	8	<b>Fax number</b>	01244 364659
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Fintan Bradley
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sian Thomas

<b>Age group</b> 13 to 17	<b>Inspection dates</b> 22 November 2005 - 22 November 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 282684
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

The unit was first registered in September 2004. In September 2005 staffing increased from 1 full-time teacher to the equivalent of 2.6 full-time teachers. Whilst management committee members have been identified, they have yet to be appointed. The unit is the education provision for in-patients at the Regional Adolescent Psychiatric Unit for the North West region. At any one time, there are between 7 and 14 pupils in the unit, whose abilities range from those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to others capable of high general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) and advanced level (A-level) standards. Pupils remain on the roll of their mainstream schools. To ensure continuity, schools provide much of the pupils' coursework although because of their complex mental health needs, the unit's staff modify approaches to pupils' learning. Pupils' time at the unit varies from around four months to stays that can last over a year. Eight pupils aged 14-17 were being supported at the time of the inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

The unit is good with some outstanding features. This matches the unit's view of itself and that of parents and pupils. It offers good value for money. All staff help pupils with complex mental health difficulties to grow in confidence and want to learn. This shows in pupils' enjoyment of lessons, their attitudes to work and in their attendance. All staff excel in working very closely with a broad range of health service and other professionals in ensuring outstanding improvement in pupils' personal development. The promotion of healthy lifestyles, safe practices and self-esteem is paramount. Success in this also pays off in good achievement across a broad range of subjects, although the small size of the accommodation limits the provision of practical subjects. Individual pupil's plans based upon detailed initial assessments ensure that all pupils' needs are recognised and met, regardless of age, ability or health diagnosis. Subsequent tracking of progress towards meeting individual targets could be sharper. So too could the use of other information kept individually, for instance, about pupils' successes in coursework, national examinations or reintegration into mainstream schools. This information is not kept in a way that lends itself easily, for instance, to analysing trends. This is already recognised by the unit. Although the local authority and local health authority have been integral in the success of the unit since it became registered, the expansion in staffing and increased budget requires that a management committee is speedily convened for greater oversight and support of the unit's work. The teacher in charge is visionary and leads by example. The unit has developed markedly since it started. Current staff show every sign of having the expertise to take the unit from strength to strength.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

Work with sixth form pupils is just as effective as with the younger ones. As a package, the individual nature of all pupils' health and educational needs are met in the same effective way. Where extra subject expertise is needed to provide more advanced coursework, tutors are brought in. This is a cost effective way of meeting these needs.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

Ensure staff are supported by an effective management committee in:

- checking more coherently on the success in pupils' academic achievement and reintegration into mainstream schools
- providing as effectively as possible for those practical subjects affected by the restrictions of the accommodation.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards attained reflect pupils' abilities and health, but overall, are broadly what would be expected nationally. The pupils' complex mental health needs and medication can affect detrimentally the levels of work produced; this can differ from day-to-day. With this in mind, all pupils achieve well. They make good progress in English, mathematics and science. In addition, individually, pupils do well in other subjects. For some, this is reflected in the GCSE grades achieved, frequently when they have returned to their mainstream school after successful treatment and reintegration. One such school commented, 'thanks to you and your team for all the hard work that helped our two pupils achieve these creditable GCSE results'. Between them the pupils gained 10 A-C grades in English, mathematics, science, religious education, Spanish, geography and art and design. Individual pupil's records show that after treatment and educational support, pupils improve well, for example, in literacy or numeracy when set against National Curriculum expectations. This is a good picture.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding and is at the heart of the support and treatment offered to pupils. It is because of this success that pupils achieve well educationally. In particular, the multi-professional support for improvement in pupils' healthy lifestyles and the adoption of safe practices is paramount, and successful. This links closely with other areas so that more well rounded individuals are able to reintegrate with their previous schools, or start new ones. In the context of their mental health difficulties, pupils behave well, always attend the unit if they are able to and enjoy the successes they achieve, which are always celebrated by everyone. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They get on well with each other and staff, go off-site into the community whenever possible, including part-time placements at local colleges. Pupils choose charities for which to fundraise, such as a forthcoming car wash for the local 'sudden infant death syndrome charity'. Perhaps more than anything, with staff support, pupils are helped to understand themselves and to build their confidence and self-esteem outstandingly well. The choice pupils are given to express their opinions is a strength of the unit. All of this prepares pupils very well for their future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Overall, teaching and learning are outstanding because of staff's skills in meeting pupils' individual needs so well. Because of the nature of the unit's work, a near-perfect balance is found between supporting and extending pupils' personal development and academic achievement. Staff are very clear how pupils are likely to respond to situations,

frequently pre-empting difficulties. The multi-disciplinary team available in lessons ensures that when necessary, lessons are very well staffed, full of fun and have staff who know all aspects of the pupils' needs very well. This contributes to high pupil and staff morale. Initial assessment of pupils' individual levels of working takes into account the information received from their mainstream schools. This, together with the unit's own assessments, allows staff to know where to 'plug-in' pupils to their coursework and what the next issue is that each pupil needs to learn. This works very well on a day-to-day basis. Inspection evidence agrees with the teacher in charge's view that staff have very good subject knowledge. Buying in extra expertise when necessary and supporting current staff with additional training add to this. Staff ensure consistently that pupils are very clear about what they are going to learn, what to expect from the activity and how they should relate to others. This was obvious in the group session on 'Superheroes' in English where those pupils present contributed their part to a well-rounded discussion.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is well matched to the personal development and learning needs of all pupils. Work is enriched by access to a good array of information and communication technology equipment, which together with increased staff skills, has resulted in significant improvement since the unit opened. The accommodation is modern and very welcoming but with limited teaching space. Staff work very hard to overcome the drawbacks of the lack of space for practical subjects, particularly in science and physical education. This is evident in effective tabletop science in the kitchen area and sessions from visiting experts who lead therapeutic dance and yoga. The unit has formed close links with two local schools with the intention of extending opportunities for physical exercise. In addition to the main thrust to encourage pupils to develop healthy and safe lifestyles, pockets of learning in citizenship, sex and relationships, and drugs awareness are built into lesson planning: this could be done in a more structured way. Staff operate successfully very flexible timetables for pupils, which wrap-around other treatments.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The unit takes very good care of all the pupils. Child protection and health and safety procedures are in place and known by staff. Pupils trust staff and know who to turn to when they feel able to ask for help. Pupils' needs are supported and tracked closely so that 'hiccups' are spotted and responded to quickly when they are upset or troubled. Pupils are able to express themselves clearly and recognise how much staff want to support them. Very close links with parents, other professionals and mainstream schools ensures all the vital people are involved. This supports improvement in pupils' medical conditions and in reintegrating successfully into the wider community. After leaving the unit, one pupil wrote, 'you were the ones that believed in me most and I can't describe how thankful I am'. A parent wrote 'you did a great job to the point that my

child has poems published in three books'. The unit is conscious that more frequent reports on pupils' academic progress would be more beneficial to parents and plans are in place to achieve this.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Overall, leadership and management by the teacher in charge are good. She leads by example, with excellent teaching skills, infectious enthusiasm and has a very clear vision of how to develop the unit further for all pupils. Overall strengths of the unit's work and what else needs to be done are well known. All staff are included in this thinking. Where improvement in staff's skills is considered necessary, this is planned well with local authority support. Key officers of the local authority and leaders of the adolescent psychiatric unit have supported developments to date very closely, particularly since the unit was registered. They have carried out some of the expected functions of a management committee. However, bringing together a broader range of professionals and parental representation to form a management committee is now overdue. Strategic planning for further development and more detailed monitoring of the unit's work is required. The unit and the local authority appreciate the benefits this will bring in monitoring the success of the unit. Ways of tracking trends in pupils' academic success, their reintegration into mainstream schools and in ensuring staff's performance is fully monitored are three examples of work that would alert the unit to where further improvements could be made. This approach should complement the skills of the teacher in charge and staff who show every capacity for improving the unit further.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	1
The behaviour of learners	2	2
The attendance of learners	1	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	1
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	3
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for making me so welcome. Your laughter in the first session of the morning was infectious. A special thank you to the very mature young man who found the time to talk with me about how well he had settled into lessons.

You attend a really good unit where everyone appears to be one big happy family. Your enthusiasm for work stems from your teachers' desire for you to do well. They want the best for you. You put as much energy as possible into lessons and get on well with everyone. You should be proud of the impressive progress you make in your work. Please help Sian and the other staff so that they can continue to plan exciting activities and lessons that will challenge you to improve even more.

I have asked the staff to look at ways of checking a little more clearly just how well you are improving in your work, the ways in which staff help you to reintegrate into your mainstream schools and the opportunities you have to do more practical work and physical exercise. Your unit should have the help and support of a group of people called a management committee who ensure you are getting the best possible education. I have asked for this to happen.

I hope each and everyone of you improve in your health and have a very positive future. I know from reading letters from pupils who have left the unit, that you have every chance of being successful.